

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 104

SP 027 432

AUTHOR Hall, Carroll L.
 TITLE Responding to Change From Without.
 PUB DATE 28 Feb 86
 NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (Chicago, IL, February 26-March 1, 1986).
 PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Admission Criteria; Educational Cooperation; Program Length; *State Legislation; *State Standards; *Teacher Certification; *Teacher Education Programs

ABSTRACT

This paper first discusses similarities between the medical profession and the present status of the education profession. Discussion centers on changes in education in New Mexico generated by external agencies to which colleges are having to respond, as did medical schools in the past. The New Mexico State Department of Education developed the Staff Accountability Plan, addressing the issue of teacher and administrator accountability and certification through three provisions: a written basic skills assessment for admission to teacher preparation programs; professional and content-specific knowledge for initial certification; and an integrated program of on-the-job performance evaluation using criteria of effective teaching and staff development activities. How the various colleges of education throughout the state have responded to these required changes is discussed. Also discussed are the experimental results of a cooperative effort between the University of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Public Schools, and the State Department of Education, involving the use of observation instruments and scales in a fifth-year internship program. (JD)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

FD268104

RESPONDING TO CHANGE FROM WITHOUT

Prepared by
Carroll L. Hall
State Director
Evaluation, Testing, and Data Management
New Mexico State Department of Education
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Presentation to
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
1986 Annual Meeting
Chicago, Illinois - February 28, 1986

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C. L. Hall

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

* Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

RESPONDING TO CHANGE FROM WITHOUT

Inert is a term which at times has been applied to pedagogical education during this decade. Public dissatisfaction with schools and teachers, as noted by the various national reports on education and opinion polls, is now being dealt with by state and federal governments through legislative action. This paper will discuss: another profession which underwent change from without a century ago; state directed accountability for teachers and administrators; creative college approaches which address specific needs; and proposals and legislation for additional reform.

Sociologists and historians have drawn attention to certain parallels between the status of the medical profession until the 1920's and present day education. If we are to learn from the past, certain of these parallels are worthy of review.

Medical doctors have not always been held in high esteem or received considerable financial remuneration. In the last century, the medical profession was generally insecure in its status and income due in part to its inability to control entry into practice or to raise standards of medical education. The profession had little unity and was unable to assert any collective authority over its own members who held diverse and often incompatible views.

In the 1830's and 1840's, claims to privileged competence resulted in state legislators voting to do away with medical licensure entirely. As Paul

Starr noted in his book, The Social Transformation of American Medicine, the Harvard graduating class of 1844 was told by Oliver Wendell Holmes that no profession was being allowed, "to be the best judge of its own men and doctrines." This was due in part to the inability of the profession to prevent inflation of degrees and titles which resulted in the diffusion and degradation of status symbols. The supply of physicians was unrestricted due to lack of significant institutional barriers to entry and to the low cost of obtaining a medical education in terms of both time and money.

Starr also quoted Charles Eliot, who became president of Harvard University in 1869, as stating, "The ignorance and general incompetency of the average graduate of American Medical Schools, at the time when he receives the degree which turns him loose upon the community, is something horrible to contemplate. The whole system of medical education in this country needs thorough reformation." Students were coming to medical schools with minimal preparation and following courses in any order they pleased. While a few professors favored upgrading standards of admission and the curriculum, a conservative majority opposed a reformation. A conservative Harvard medical faculty member, Henry Bigelow, asked Eliot how the medical faculty had for eighty years been managing its own affairs and doing it well and now great changes were being proposed. Eliot's response after a dead silence, "I can answer Dr. Bigelow's question very easily; there is a new President." Change came not from within the profession but from without. Under Eliot, Harvard University, and later John Hopkins University, would set the standards for medical education in this country.

Some of the descriptions of medical education from over a century ago presently describe the area of pedagogy. Now in education, as then in medicine, questions regarding change are being debated with often times more being said than done. Colleges of education have been accused of too much jealousy, divisiveness, fear and ineptness in leadership to overhaul their programs. As Othanel Smith stated in the October 1980 issue of Phi Delta Kappan, "...only forces broader and more powerful than those of a single college can ever break through the barriers and restraints to bring about a new day in pedagogical education."

Apparently, that new day is here. Now significant changes in the structure of education are being made; not necessarily by the profession or institutions, but by elected officials. Professor Smith went on to say, "The failure of the colleges to take matters into their own hands and to do something about their programs creates a vacuum into which state and federal governments are moving in response to public dissatisfaction with schools and teachers."

The New Mexico State Board of Education is an example of an elected state entity which has been responding to legislative and public inquiry regarding educator accountability since 1980. The State Board of Education, after 18 months of extensive research and study, by the Department of Education staff and a state advisory council, adopted the Staff Accountability Plan for New Mexico Schools in November 1981. The Staff Accountability Plan contains three provisions: 1) a written basic skills assessment component for teacher preparation programs; 2) a written assessment of general, professional, and

content specific knowledge for initial certification; and 3) an integrated program of on-the-job performance evaluation utilizing criteria of effective teaching and administrative competencies which must be included as a part of an individual's annual evaluation.

Provision I requires, as a condition for approval, a basic skills accountability plan from teacher preparation programs in New Mexico. A component of the plan must include a written examination in reading, writing, and math on which students must demonstrate adequate skills by passing the examinations prior to completion of their training program. The examination and performance standards are selected by each institution. To address consistency, each institution's basic skills plan is reviewed by the Professional Standards Commission which is appointed by the State Board of Education. The State Board then receives the recommendations of the Commission for approval or disapproval.

The Professional Standards Commission, working in conjunction with the teacher preparation program administrators throughout the state, have adopted a requirement for a comprehensive admission plan incorporating: first, a description of the program's basic skills accountability plan; next an identification of the objectives, skills, and rationale for selection of the written examination in reading, writing, and math; and, finally, procedures for administering the examination, determining the passing scores, and providing remediation.

Examinations in the three basic areas vary throughout the state and include institutionally developed tests, college admission tests, a nationally produced pre-professional skills test, and the use of parts of a national teacher examination. Passing scores for each of the tests at the various teacher preparation programs is provided each year to the State Department of Education. Information is also reported annually on the number of students taking the examination, passing and failing rates, and demographic information on the background of the students. Additionally, information is available by institution on action which is taken after failure of the examinations, as well as the type of remediation which is available.

Provision II of the Staff Accountability Plan requires an examination of general education, communication skills, methods and practices, and content specialization knowledge of all applicants as one of the requirements for initial teaching and administrative certification.

Based on research and review work conducted by the State Department of Education staff and an advisory council regarding feasible options, the Provision II Staff Accountability Council assessed a copy of the National Teacher Examinations (NTE). In order to determine the appropriateness of these examinations for the state's needs, the Council recommended that validation and field testing activities be initiated.

The validation process utilized data from three panels. Panel members were selected on the basis of requisite expert qualifications, fair representation of colleges and public schools, and fair representation of faculties at

colleges and schools with significant ethnic minorities. A Content Review Panel, consisting of qualified college and university faculties members, examined the relationship between the content of the NTE and content of the general education and teacher preparation programs in the state. This was accomplished by ascertaining if the education student would have had the opportunity to learn the material contained in the test. A Knowledge Estimation Panel, also composed of college and university faculty members, provided information on what level of information on the NTE should be expected of a candidate possessing the minimum amount of knowledge necessary to complete an approved teacher preparation program and enter the classroom to teach. The question asked of these panel members involved the minimum number of items a qualified candidate would answer correctly. A third panel, Job Relevance, was requested by the State Department of Education and has since been incorporated by ETS as a standard part of the validation process. The Job Relevance Panel addressed the relevance of content and skills tested by the NTE to the classroom situation by utilizing K-12 classroom teachers to determine if the material contained in the test was important and useful for the beginning educator. Additionally, panelists were asked to note any items which they believed might be biased against a particular sex or ethnic group.

The three independent panels found the Communication Skills, General Knowledge, and Professional Knowledge of the NTE Core Battery to be valid for use in New Mexico. Additionally, twelve of twenty-one Specialty Area Tests were also found to be appropriate to use in issuing initial teaching and administrative certificates.

Provision III of the Staff Accountability Plan focuses on the evaluation of certified personnel based on criteria defining effective teaching and administrative performance which have been adopted by the State Board of Education. Utilizing extensive research on effective teaching, a statewide advisory council, comprised of public school teachers and higher education faculty members, developed twelve proposed teaching competencies which incorporated 63 statements indicating effective teaching. Ten thousand surveys containing the competencies and indicators were distributed statewide to educators, legislators, school board members, and the general public. The purpose of the survey was to determine the degree of consensus regarding which of the competencies and indicators were considered essential for effective teaching. The survey results narrowed the field to six competencies. A similar process was followed to derive six essential competencies for principals. The teacher and principal competencies were adopted by the State Board of Education as a required part of each individual's evaluation beginning July 1, 1986.

Also incorporated into Provision III is the development of structured support systems for the purpose of strengthening professional skills and removing deficiencies. Assistance is also to be provided for teachers and administrators in developing the skills necessary for the implementation of a personnel evaluation system based on the identified competencies. For the past two summers, the State Department of Education has conducted Principal Leadership Academies for current school administrators during which time superintendents and principals are provided with training in evaluating teacher performance and administrator-teacher conferencing skills. This type of training is being incorporated into the college preparation programs.

At this point it is appropriate to return to what Othanel Smith said at the beginning of this decade, "It is likely, of course, that one or two institutions will blaze a new path." In fact, not all change is coming from without. Some institutions are successfully making changes in the preparation of educators.

Eastern New Mexico University is an example of change from within. Beginning almost three years ago, the education administration and faculty initiated a process which involved school district teachers and administrators in reviewing catalogue course offerings. As a result of making determinations of what teachers in the field really need to know, almost half of the catalogue course offerings were eliminated as being inappropriate, lacking academic credibility, or no longer being taught. An entire degree offering, the Education Specialist, was eliminated. Presently, reform is proceeding with an examination of the remaining curriculum within the school of education. Courses, course sequencing, and course content are being scrutinized to determine what a fully certifiable graduate should be able to accomplish upon entry in the classroom. Any changes which may come about as a result of this process will not add additional credit hour requirements. If a new course is required, then one must be eliminated.

Another creative program has been successful for a number of years. The Albuquerque Public Schools/University of New Mexico Graduate Intern Program involves an exchange whereby the University provides first year teachers who hold state certificates to the public schools. In exchange, Albuquerque Public Schools releases experienced classroom teachers to serve as

supervisors in the undergraduate teacher training programs at the University. First year teachers receive structured support involving in-class consultations, teaching demonstrations, instructional support, in-service workshops, and other related support services. The interns receive a fellowship from the University, tuition waivers for two summers and two semesters, and credit toward a Master of Arts degree. Last year the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education presented this program with the Distinguished Achievement Award.

In anticipation of a teacher shortage, a creative approach to preparing teachers is presently being jointly sponsored by the New Mexico State Department of Education, St. John's College in Santa Fe, the University of New Mexico, and the Santa Fe Public Schools. During the summer of 1985, 16 graduates of St. John's College were selected to participate in a special teacher training program. Students at St. John's study a great books curriculum. After graduation, the St. John's participants attended a summer training institute held at the University of New Mexico which provided intensive training in the psychology of learning, curriculum, and other education related subjects. During the Fall of 1985, the interns were placed, in pairs, to team-teach in various public schools in the Santa Fe school district. Each team is supervised by the program coordinator. Weekly seminars are held to deal with general and specific instructional strategies. While the formative evaluation continues throughout the current school year, a preliminary summative evaluation shows a positive experiment which has been well received by those involved.

Other changes in the education structure are being proposed by coalitions of individuals from both within and without the educational structure. This past fall the State Board of Education appointed 75 individuals representing a diverse cross section of the state population to one of five task forces. An Education Preparation Task Force has been charged with developing proposals for assuring the quality of graduates of education preparation programs. The Certification/Reciprocity Task Force is developing proposals which lead to a licensure system that is equitable, workable, and responsive to the needs of the schools in the state. A third task force, Recertification/Continuing Education, is preparing proposals for a system of licensure review related to increased knowledge, competence, and performance; not just the accumulation of additional college credit hours. The Alternative Certification/Small Schools group is addressing alternative routes to certification for people with unique qualifications and for meeting the unique staffing needs of small school districts. A fifth task force, concerned with Professional Status, is developing proposals to increase the prestige of the education profession and attract and retain qualified people in the profession.

The proposals prepared by the task forces were distributed to the field for reactions and comments. Returns are now being analyzed to determine which proposals will be used to develop a comprehensive master plan for teacher preparation, certification, and continuing certification in New Mexico.

However, change from without still continues. The recently concluded state legislative session saw specific statutory language directed to the teacher

preparation programs. Specifically addressed were certification requirements which state that any person seeking certification in elementary and secondary education must complete, at a minimum, in the college of arts and sciences, twelve hours of English; twelve hours of history to include American history and western civilization; six hours of mathematics; six hours of science, including biology, chemistry, physics, geology, zoology, and botany; and six hours of fine arts.

Additionally, the requirements for certification include no less than fourteen weeks of student teaching; a portion of which shall occur in the first thirty credit hours taken in the college of education under the direct supervision of a certified school instructor and a portion of which shall occur in the student's senior year with the student being directly responsible for the classroom. This is now a part of state statutes.

This paper has presented similarities between the medical profession of the past and the present status of education. Discussion has been centered on changes in education in New Mexico generated by external agencies, to which colleges are having to respond. New programs to address needs have been described and new requirements yet to be implemented have been mentioned.

It was noted earlier in this paper that President Eliot in 1869 had written of the ignorance and general incompetence of the average graduate of American Medical Schools. In 1880, Eliot wrote that while a decade earlier medical students had been notably inferior in bearing and manner to other university students, they were now their equals. Perhaps the recent attention focused

on education by those outside the profession will, as it did with medicine, assist in the development of a prestigious profession.